



Howbridge Infant School

# School Attendance

## A guide for Parents and Carers



Being at school is a very important part of any child's life. It enables them to learn, to make friends, to gain important knowledge and to develop a variety of skills which will prepare them for adult life. School and parents/carers are partners in making this a success. As parents or carers it is **your legal responsibility** to make sure that your child makes the most of this opportunity by attending regularly.

### Leave of absence

The current law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child out of school during term time. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024 prohibits Headteachers granting leave of absence to a pupil except where an application has been made in advance and the Headteacher considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

**If the absence is not authorised and the leave of absence is taken, the case will be referred to the Local Authority who may issue a Penalty Notice for £160 (or £80 if paid within 21 days) to each parent for each child taken out of school.**

From the 2024 to 2025 school year, each parent will only get up to 2 fines for the same child in a 3-year period. If you get a second fine in 3 years it will be £160. If you do not pay the fine in 28 days you may be taken to court for keeping your child out of school. If your child is absent from school 3 or more times within the 3 years you will not be fined but may be taken to court.

### Medical appointments

Non-urgent medical appointments should not be made during the school day. If the appointment needs to be during school hours, please provide the school with appointment cards, texts or hospital letters, so that a copy can be taken for the school records.

### What should I do if my child is absent?

By law, schools must record absences and the reason given. You must contact your child's school as soon as possible with a reason for absence. If no reason is recorded your child will receive an unauthorised mark.

You can call the school office on 01376 512153 and leave a message, or use Studybugs online: <https://studybugs.com/about/parents>.

### Attendance procedures

- We do not authorise absences without a good reason.
- We will telephone or text you if your child is absent and we have not heard from you.
- We monitor attendance carefully and will write to you if your child's attendance drops below 93%.
- If attendance problems continue we will ask you to meet with us to discuss the way forward and possibly ask you to provide medical evidence before we authorise anymore absences.
- If all measures fail to lead to an improvement in attendance, we may refer your child to the Local Authority, which may lead to legal action being instigated.

### Punctuality

When your child arrives late at school, he/she misses the teacher's instructions and the introduction to the lesson. Punctuality is important for children to start the day off well.

You can help by:

- Ensuring your child arrives at 8.40am when the classroom doors open (our registers close at 8.55am promptly).
- Prepare packed lunches, school bags and breakfast items the night before.
- Make sure you set an alarm clock for a reasonable time to get everyone up and ready.

**If you have concern or there is an issue around attendance or punctuality, please speak to your child's class teacher. There is advice and support for children and their families.**

### Did you know?

#### Excellent attendance

- 100% = 0 learning hours lost
- 99% = 10 learning hours lost

We aim for excellent attendance!

#### Good attendance

- 98% = 20 learning hours lost
- 97% = 30 learning hours lost
- 96% = 37.5 learning hours lost

#### Cause for concern

- 95% = 47.5 learning hours lost
- 94% = 55 learning hours lost
- 93% = 65 learning hours lost
- 92% = 75 learning hours lost
- 91% = 85 learning hours lost

At this level of absence your child's attendance would be monitored and if it continues at this level, it is likely that we will make a referral to the Local Authority for irregular school attendance.

**A pupil will be deemed to be a 'persistent absentee' where their attendance falls below 90%.**

